

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): An aqueous dispersion of a water-soluble polymer of N-vinylformamide and/or of N-vinylacetamide, wherein the dispersion contains, based on 100 parts by weight of water,

(A) from 5 to 80 parts by weight of a water-soluble polymer containing N-vinylformamide units and/or N-vinylacetamide units and having a particle size of from 50 nm to 2 μ m

D³ (B) from 1 to 50 parts by weight of at least one polymeric dispersant which is selected from the group consisting of carboxymethylcellulose, water-soluble starch, starch esters, starch xanthogenates, starch acetates, dextran, polyalkylene glycols, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyvinylpyridine, polyethyleneimine, polyvinylimidazole, polyvinylsuccinimide, a 1:1 molar ratio copolymer of N-vinylcaprolactam and N-vinylacetamide, and polydiallyldimethylammonium chloride, the aqueous dispersion being substantially free of stabilizing inorganic salt.

Claim 2 (Original): An aqueous dispersion of a water-soluble polymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the dispersion contains, based on 100 parts by weight of water,

(A) from 10 to 50 parts by weight of a water-soluble polymer containing N-vinylformamide units and/or N-vinylacetamide units and

(B) from 5 to 40 parts by weight of at least one polymeric dispersant.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): An aqueous dispersion of a water-soluble polymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the dispersion contains as component (A) a homopolymer of N-vinylformamide.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): An aqueous dispersion of a water-soluble polymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the N-vinylformamide units and/or vinylacetamide units of the polymer (A) have been partially or completely converted into a polymer containing vinylamine units by hydrolysis with acids or bases.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A process for the preparation of an aqueous dispersion of a water-soluble polymer of N-vinylformamide and/or of N-vinylacetamide, wherein

(A) from 5 to 80 parts by weight of monomers comprising N-vinylformamide and/or N-vinylacetamide, with or without other monoethylenically unsaturated monomers, which form water-soluble polymers therewith, and

(B) from 1 to 50 parts by weight of at least one polymeric dispersant which is selected from the group consisting of carboxymethylcellulose, water-soluble starch, starch esters, starch xanthogenates, starch acetates, dextran, polyalkylene glycols, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyvinylpyridine, polyethyleneimine, polyvinylimidazole, polyvinylsuccinimide, a 1:1 molar ratio copolymer of N-vinylcaprolactam and N-vinylmethylacetamide, and polydiallyldimethylammonium chloride,

in 100 parts by weight of water substantially free of stabilizing inorganic salts, are subjected to free radical polymerization at from 30 to 95 C in the presence of from 0.001 to 5.0% by weight, based on the monomers used, of a polymerization initiator which forms free radicals under the polymerization condition, the ratio of the components (A) and (B) being so selected that the polymerization results in dispersions at 50 nm to 2 μ m sized particles of the water soluble polymer in water.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 5, wherein

(A) from 10 to 50 parts by weight of monomers comprising N-vinylformamide and/or vinylacetamide, with or without other monoethylenically unsaturated monomers which form water-soluble polymers therewith, and

(B) from 5 to 40 parts by weight of at least one polymeric dispersant,

in 100 parts by weight of water, are polymerized at from 40 to 70 C with from 0.5 to 2.0% by weight, based on the monomers used in the polymerization, of an azo compound which decomposes into free radicals under the polymerization conditions.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 5, wherein the polymeric dispersant (B) used, is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, copolymers of ethylene glycol and propylene glycol, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyridine, polyvinylimidazole, polyvinylsuccinimide, a 1:1 molar ratio copolymer of N-vinylcaprolactam and N-vinylmethylacetamide, polydiallyldimethylammonium chloride, polyethyleneimine and mixtures thereof.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein

(A) N-vinylformamide, with or without other monoethylenically unsaturated monomers, and

(B) polyethylene glycol, polyvinylpyrrolidone or mixtures thereof are polymerized at from 40 to 55 C with a water-soluble azo initiator.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein

(A) N-vinylformamide, with or without other monoethylenically unsaturated monomers, and

(B) polyethylene glycol, polyvinylpyrrolidone or mixtures thereof are polymerized at from 40 to 55 C with a water-soluble azo initiator.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 7, wherein

(A) N-vinylformamide, with or without other monoethylenically unsaturated monomers, and

(B) polyethylene glycol, polyvinylpyrrolidone or mixtures thereof are polymerized at from 40 to 55 C with a water-soluble azo initiator.